



The Miracle of American Oil: Drilling Our Way to Freedom from Foreign Oil

Continental Resources, Jan 1, 2014 - SO16 Silver Anvil Award of Excellence

Summary: 2014 Silver Anvil Award of Excellence Winner — Public Affairs — Business

Campaigns include programs specifically designed to influence public policy and/or affect legislation, regulations, political activities or candidacies — at the local, state or federal government levels — so that the entity funding the program benefits.

Today we have an immediate threat – dependence on foreign oil. To correct misconceptions, showcase how the world has changed, and advocate for the policies needed to continue America's path to energy security, the Continental PR team launched the "Miracle of American Oil" campaign on October 16, 2013 – the 40th anniversary of the OPEC Oil Embargo.

Full Text: **SUMMARY**

In 2010, Continental Resources CEO Harold Hamm began championing the reality of American energy independence – a feat most everyone thought impossible at the time. By 2013, most experts had embraced the message of energy independence. However, public misconceptions and harmful federal policies still existed, including:

- The misconception that the world had reached “peak oil.”
- The misconception that “fracking” was driving America’s oil and natural gas renaissance.
- The religion of anti-fossil fuels activism.
- Shortsighted federal legislation banning crude oil exports.

Today we have an immediate threat – dependence on foreign oil. To correct misconceptions, showcase how the world has changed, and advocate for the policies needed to continue America's path to energy security, the Continental PR team launched the “Miracle of American Oil” campaign on October 16, 2013 – the 40th anniversary of the OPEC Oil Embargo.

Objectives:

- Showcase the benefits of America’s oil and natural gas renaissance.
- Change the vernacular from fracking to horizontal drilling.
- Propel crude oil exports to the top of the U.S. policy agenda.

Target Audience:

- Media
- Congress

RESEARCH

Continental used both primary and secondary research for this campaign.

Primary Research: Continental Resources was an early adopter of horizontal drilling and has witnessed first-hand how this advanced technology has unlocked vast new resources once thought to be unreachable.

- Graph directly correlating the increase in horizontal drilling to the increase in American oil production.

Secondary Research: Continental researched industry analysis to prove the disparity between the perception of energy scarcity and the reality of American energy independence.

- Impact of 1973 OPEC Oil Embargo
 - Daily shipments of oil from the Middle East dropped from 1.2 million barrels to 19,000 barrels
 - Quadrupled oil prices
 - Forced gasoline rationing
 - Reactionary federal regulations were passed
- How the world has changed
 - In response to dramatic changes in our global energy industry, legislators have repealed or let expire nearly all post-embargo regulations save two: the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 and the Export Administration Act of 1979, which essentially ban crude oil exports.
 - The “scarcity mentality” that originally led to the creation of these export restrictions no longer reflects the economic reality of the global energy marketplace of today.
 - The Bakken play has 903 billion barrels of oil in place.
 - The U.S. has overtaken Russia as the world’s largest energy producer.
 - Commissioned Harris Interactive poll results indicate 93 percent of Americans now believe energy independence is an important goal for the U.S.
 - Benefits of America’s oil and natural gas renaissance
 - Gasoline prices are below \$3 a gallon in many places
 - Diesel fuel prices are down 20%
 - Unemployment is down in oil producing states
- Key media coverage perpetuating the myth that fracking is the cause of new U.S. oil and natural gas supplies
 - Wall Street Journal article “U.S. Oil Notches Record Growth: Rise in Production is World's Largest; Fueled by Fracking”

PLANNING / CONTENT

To correct misconceptions about peak oil and hydraulic fracturing and introduce exports as the next step to continuing America’s oil and natural gas renaissance, the Continental Resources PR team developed a comprehensive strategy to reach key national media and Congress. Timing was key. We utilized the 40th anniversary of the OPEC Oil Embargo as a launching point for the Miracle of American Oil campaign, which served as the umbrella for each of these key issues.

Components of the campaign included the “Miracle of American Oil” media dinner in Washington, D.C., with key national reporters and the Domestic Energy Producers Alliance, a group of independent producers and royalty owners, who helped put a face with the men and women who are driving America’s energy revolution. The media dinner was held on the 40th anniversary of the OPEC Oil Embargo and on that same day we submitted an op-ed to *FORBES* titled “NOPEC: America’s New Energy Reality 40 Years after Oil Embargo.” We also launched the “Miracle of American Oil” advertising campaign in the Washington, D.C., market.

RESULTS

The Miracle of American Oil campaign resulted in key media coverage of America’s oil and natural gas renaissance, horizontal drilling as a driver of this renaissance, and the need for

crude oil exports. The campaign not only served as a catalyst to correct public misconceptions, but it also propelled crude oil exports to the top of the U.S. Senate's agenda. In January, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee invited Harold Hamm to provide testimony at the first Congressional hearing on U.S. crude oil exports in more than 25 years. The PR team's objectives to showcase the benefits of America's oil and natural gas renaissance, change the vernacular from fracking to horizontal drilling, and launch crude oil exports to the top of the U.S. policy agenda were all achieved.

- Several of Washington's most influential reporters attended the "Miracle of American Oil" media dinner:
 - Robert Samuelson, *The Washington Post*
 - Ed Crooks, *Financial Times*
 - Jonathon Fahey, *Associated Press*
 - Tim Gardner, *Reuters*
 - Neil King, Jr., *The Wall Street Journal*
 - Jim Snyder, *Bloomberg News*
 - Asjlynn Loder, *Bloomberg News*
 - Amy Harder, *National Journal*
 - Peter Behr, *E&E*
 - Bill Loveless, *Platts Energy Week*

- Harold Hamm provided key testimony at the first Congressional hearing on U.S. crude oil exports in more than 25 years.
- Continental Resources secured an *NBC Nightly News* feature with Harry Smith on the Miracle of American Oil.
- Continental Resources secured an editorial written by *Financial Times* covering the need to end the U.S. crude oil export ban.
- Continental Resources secured placement of Harold Hamm's op-ed "NOPEC: America's New Energy Reality 40 Years after Oil Embargo" in *FORBES*.
- Continental Resources set in motion a definitive change in press coverage to include horizontal drilling as a driver of America's oil and natural gas renaissance.
- Continental Resources was recognized on the *Financial Times* 2014 "Drivers of Change" list of six companies that are changing the world.
- Harold Hamm was selected 2013 "CEO of the Year" by the Platts Global Energy Awards, one of the industry's highest honors.
- Continental Resources was selected 2013 "Company of the Year" by the Platts Global Energy Awards, one of the industry's highest honors.